Chapter 3

Kalyx

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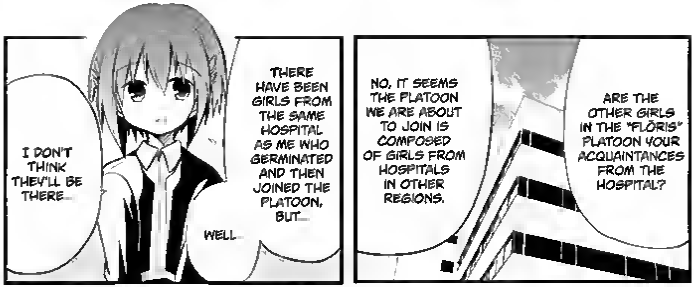
DIZZY
DIZZY
CRAP. I WASN'T ABLE TO GET A WINK OF SLEEP LAST NIGHT...
YO.
MOR-NING.
Chapter 3
OH, YOU'RE HERE.
OH.. GOOD MOR-NING...
THE BRASS ARE LOOKING FOR YOU.

GOOD MORNING, SAWAMURA-SAN
YESTERDAY WAS A LOT OF FUN.
YEAH.
YOU KNOW THAT THERE'S NO POINT IN BUYING A BOOK IF YOU DON'T READ IT, RIGHT?
I'M TAKING VERY GOOD CARE OF THE BOOK YOU BOUGHT ME. I HAVEN'T EVEN OPENED THE PACKAGING YET.

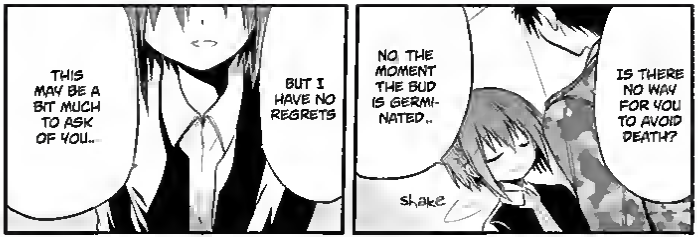
Chapter 3
[Please Go out with Me, Even If Only for a Short Period]

FOR SOME REASON I JUST CAN'T BRING MYSELF TO DO SO...
IT SEEMS WE'RE TO MEET WITH THE REST OF THE "FLORIS" PLATOON TODAY.
THE OFFICIAL TRANSFER PAPERWORK HASN'T BEEN FINISHED YET, BUT THEY WANT US TO GET INTRODUCTIONS OUT OF THE WAY FOR NOW.
!!?!
WHY DO YOU HAVE BANDAGES ON YOUR WRISTS?
OH
UM
I BURNED MYSELF BY SPILLING SOUP WHILE MAKING BREAKFAST THIS MORNING
UMM... IT'S NOTHING TOO SERIOUS, SO THERE'S NO NEED TO WORRY.
TWITCH

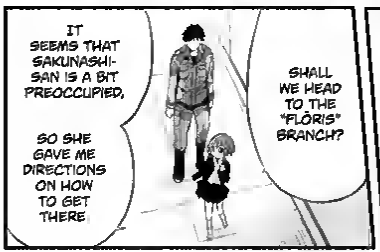

ARE THE OTHER GIRLS IN THE "FLÓRIS" PLATOON YOUR ACQUAINTANCES FROM THE HOSPITAL?
NO, IT SEEMS THE PLATOON WE ARE ABOUT TO JOIN IS COMPOSED OF GIRLS FROM HOSPITALS IN OTHER REGIONS.
THERE HAVE BEEN GIRLS FROM THE SAME HOSPITAL AS ME WHO GERMINATED AND THEN JOINED THE PLATOON, BUT...
WELL...
I DON'T THINK THEY'LL BE THERE...

BECAUSE THEY'VE ALREADY BEEN BURIED IN A FIELD OF FLOWERS?

I HAPPENED TO FIND OUT YESTERDAY.
SO YOU ALREADY KNEW...?
I SEE...
I...
I'M SORRY.
I SHOULD'VE TOLD YOU FROM THE VERY START.
WHEN WE FALL IN LOVE, AND OUR FLOWERS BLOOM AND THEIR PETALS THEN FALL,
OUR LIVES AS "HUMANS" END.
SINCE THIS TRUTH TENDS TO CAUSE A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF MENTAL STRESS ON THE MAN,
ACCORDING TO THE RULES, WE ARE SUPPOSED TO EXPLAIN THE SITUATION AND ACQUIRE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT PRIOR TO CONFESSING.
HOWEVER, IN OUR CASE,
SINCE WE WERE IN AN EMERGENCY SITUATION, YOU'RE ONLY LEARNING ABOUT THIS AFTER THE FACT.

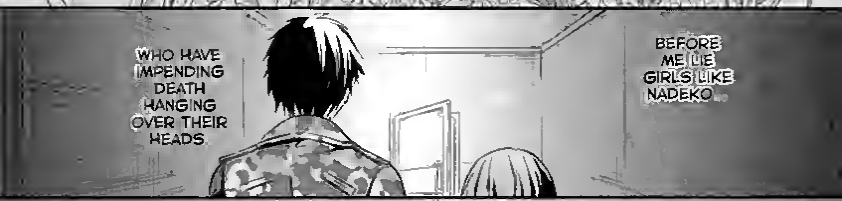

THIS MAY BE A BIT MUCH TO ASK OF YOU..
BUT I HAVE NO REGRETS
NO THE MOMENT THE BUD IS GERMI-NATED..
IS THERE NO WAY FOR YOU TO AVOID DEATH?
shake

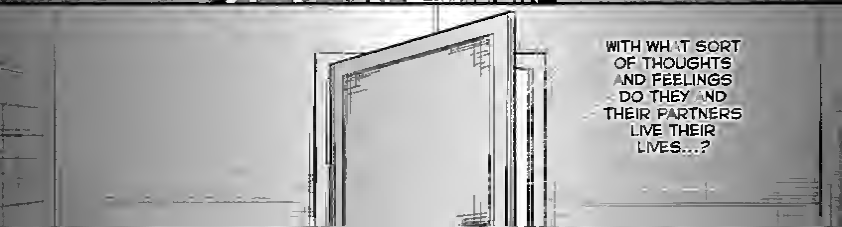
UNTIL THE END, PLEASE GO OUT WITH ME, EVEN IF ONLY FOR A SHORT PERIOD.


IT SEEMS THAT SAKUNASHI-SAN IS A BIT PREOCCUPIED,
SO SHE GAVE ME DIRECTIONS ON HOW TO GET THERE.
SHALL WE HEAD TO THE "FLÖRIS" BRANCH?

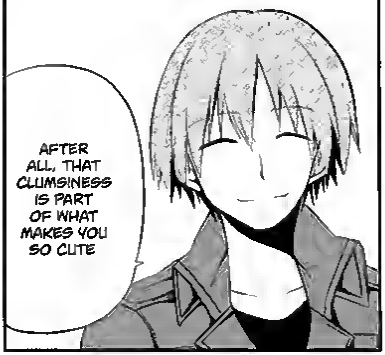
THEY SAY THAT IT COMES AS PART OF THE HOSPITAL TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR THEM TO PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR OUR CONDITIONS.
I DIDN'T KNOW AN UNDERGROUND FACILITY LIKE THIS EXISTED NEAR THE HOSPITAL...
BEEP
BEEP
CLANG
CLANG

DID THEY ALSO PASS THROUGH HERE, EXPENDING THE ENTIRETY OF THEIR LIVES BEFORE THEY PASSED?
...THE GIRLS IN THAT FLOWERBED...


WHO HAVE IMPENDING DEATH HANGING OVER THEIR HEADS.
BEFORE ME LIE GIRLS LIKE NADEKO...

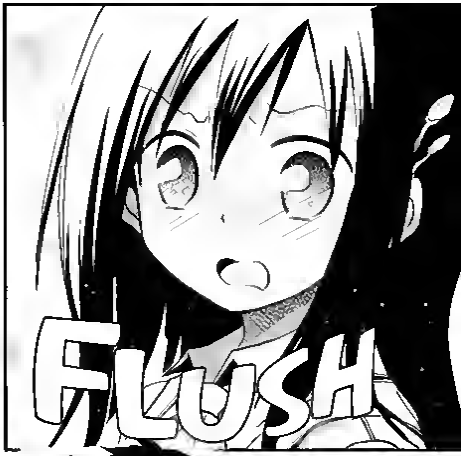

WITH WHAT SORT OF THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS DO THEY AND THEIR PARTNERS LIVE THEIR LIVES...?

!!!!
THIS MAKES NO SENSE!!!
WHOOOOSH
WHY ARE ALL OF YOURS FINE, HIMAWARI?!
I COOKED USING THE SAME OVEN, SO THAT PROBABLY ISN'T THE CASE.
WHY ARE THE COOKIES I MIXED AND BAKED EXACTLY ACCORDING TO THE RECIPE SO CRACKED?!
THAT OVEN MUST BE BROKEN SOMEHOW!!
IT'S AWFULLY DEPRESSING WHEN YOU DISSECT IT LIKE THAT!
YOU ARE FAR TOO IMPATIENT, SAKURA
YOU DIDN'T LET THE COOKIES GET ENOUGH AIR, AND YOU DIDN'T MIX THE INGREDIENTS VERY WELL
STIR STIR


AFTER ALL, THAT CLUMSINESS IS PART OF WHAT MAKES YOU SO CUTE

HAHA, I'M USED TO IT BY NOW
WELL, IT'S NOT LIKE IT MATTERS HOW THEY TURN OUT ANYWAY IF YOUR COOKIES ARE HANDMADE, THEN SHION WILL GLADLY EAT THEM.

OH NO... THE COOKIES ARE TURNING INTO CRUNCH~
SHION! JEEZ! H-HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I TOLD YOU TO NOT SAY SUCH EMBARRASSING THINGS WHEN WE'RE IN FRONT OF OTHER PEOPLE?!
STIR
STIR
STIR


FLUSH

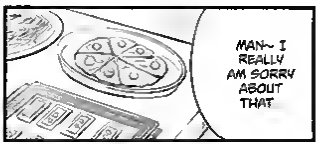
THAT WOULD CAUSE MY CHARACTER TO OVERLAP WITH SAKURA'S, SO I REFUSE.
WOAH~ THE UNFAZED COOL BEAUTY~!!
STIR
STIR
OHHH, HOW NICE! THAT FACE FLUSHED WITH EMBARRASSMENT!
ROSE, CAN'T YOU RESPOND LIKE THAT SOMETIMES WHEN I TEASE YOU?

WAI-, OLD MAN HIROGI! WHY ARE YOU DRINKING MY MILK?!
WHA-? THIS IS YOURS?
I WROTE MY NAME ON IT! HOW MANY TIMES DOES THIS MAKE IT NOW?!
NOW, NOW! RIKKA, I'LL GO MAKE SOME TEA, SO YOU CAN JUST DRINK THIS INSTEAD~
THAT ISN'T THE PROBLEM HERE!!
I SEE...
I GUESS MY TEA ISN'T ENOUGH TO SATISFY RIKKA...
THAT'S NOT-
I DIDN'T SAY THAT...!
PANIC
I WONDER IF I SHOULD MAKE COFFEE INSTEAD
NO, YOU DIDN'T DO WAIT!
I'M SORRY I SHOULD KNOW YOUR PREFERENCES SINCE WE'RE PARTNERS.
STRIDE
STRIDE
OH NO! BECAUSE OF MY CARELESS ACTIONS, A RIFT HAS FORMED BETWEEN HIMAWARI AND RIKKA!
AHHH!!! JEEZ! GODDAMN EVERYTHING!!
SHAKE
SHAKE
SWING

FLING
I REAA-AALLY AM SORRY!!
WHOO OOSH
GET A HOLD OF YOUR-SELF, YOU MIDDLE-AGED MAN!!
WOOSH
SMACK
UMM...
ARE YOU TWO PER-HAPS...
SILENCE
AH.

SLIDE
THE TWO NEWCOMERS..?
WHIRL
WHIRL

AH.. THERE'S NO WAY YOU'D REMEMBER OUR NAMES FROM THE RATHER HECTIC INTRODUCTIONS EARLIER...
AH, DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT..
UH..
I'M HIROGI SOTETSU, THE OLDEST ONE HERE.


MAN~ I REALLY AM SORRY ABOUT THAT

How old are you?
SINCE NEWCOMERS WERE COMING TODAY, WE WERE ALL PLANNING ON HAVING LUNCH TOGETHER AND THUS MADE THE NECESSARY PREPARATIONS

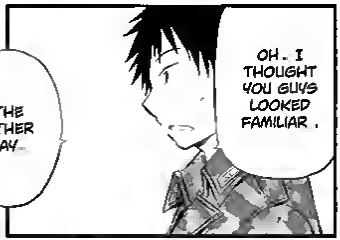
THIS LADY OVER HERE IS MY PARTNER, ROSE.
UNLIKE THIS RELIC IN HIS 30S, I'M A PRIM AND PROPER 16-YEAR-OLD
PLEASED TO MAKE YOUR ACQUAINT-ANCE.
MMM! AN EXCELLENT STRAIGHT-TO-THE-POINT INTRODUCTION, ROSE-CHAN~!

YET SHE ALWAYS REMEMBERS TO BRING ME MY FAVORITE BEER.
THAT'S WHAT MAKES HER SO CUTE.
I SEE..
I KNOW RIGHT?
SHE'S QUITE THE COOL CUSTOMER, ISN'T SHE?
STEP
STEP

I wonder if we have enough plates.
Probably?
OVER THERE ARE HIMAWARI-CHAN AND OTOGIRI RIKKA. THEY'RE 16-YEAR-OLD CHILDHOOD FRIENDS.

This is quite delicious as well
This is quite good, if you'd like to try.
NEXT TO THEM ARE SAKURA-CHAN AND TACHIBANA SHION
I THINK HE'S A LITTLE OLDER THAN YOU, SAWAMURA-CHAN

AH, SO YOU TWO ARE THE ONES WE RETRIEVED FROM THE INCIDENT A FEW DAYS AGO

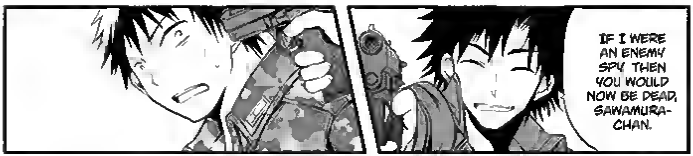

THE OTHER DAY...
OH. I THOUGHT YOU GUYS LOOKED FAMILIAR.

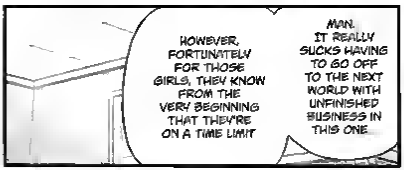
WELL, IT HAS ONLY BEEN A FEW DAYS AFTER ALL...
NO MATTER HOW I THINK ABOUT IT...
TO BE HONEST, IT STILL DOESN'T SEEM REAL...

THIS PLATOON HERE
I HAVE TO SAY, I REALLY AM SURPRISED THOUGH

IF I REMEMBER CORRECTLY, NADEKO-CHAN'S BUD BEGAN BLOOMING DURING THAT INCIDENT
YEAH

I WAS EXPECTING A MUCH GLOOMIER ATMOS-PHERE...
YOU'RE THINKING "HOW CAN THESE PEOPLE REMAIN SO CHEERFUL WHEN THE GIRLS ARE GOING TO DIE SOON?"
UH...
YEAH...
WELL, HOW SHOULD I PUT IT...?
HMM...
WHOOSH
?!
TAP


IF I WERE AN ENEMY SPY, THEN YOU WOULD NOW BE DEAD, SAWAMURA-CHAN.


MAN. IT REALLY SUCKS HAVING TO GO OFF TO THE NEXT WORLD WITH UNFINISHED BUSINESS IN THIS ONE.
HOWEVER, FORTUNATELY FOR THOSE GIRLS, THEY KNOW FROM THE VERY BEGINNING THAT THEY'RE ON A TIME LIMIT

WHIRL
WELL, THAT'S KIND OF HOW IT IS. HUMANS DON'T KNOW WHEN THEY'RE GOING TO DIE.
WHETHER IT'S TOMORROW OR A YEAR FROM NOW, IT'S SOMETHING THAT ALWAYS COMES AS A SURPRISE.
SMACK

THE FACT THAT THEY WILL DIE DOESN'T CHANGE
ON TOP OF THAT, THEY ALSO BEAR THE BURDEN OF FIGHTING IN COMBAT.

HOWEVER, THEY ARE ALLOWED TO EXPERIENCE LOVE IN EXCHANGE FOR THAT GREAT PRICE THEY ARE ASKED TO PAY...
THEY SIMPLY WANT TO ENJOY THAT TIME TO THE FULLEST, LEAVING BEHIND NO REGRETS.
Wow. I wonder if I'll really be able to eat this much.
IN RESPONSE TO THEIR FEELINGS, THERE'S ONLY ONE THING WE AS THEIR PARTNERS CAN DO.
SUCH YOUNG GIRLS, STRUGGLING AND FIGHTING TO LIVE WITH SUCH STRONG CONVICTION...
I'M PRETTY SURE ALL OF THESE GIRLS ALREADY STEELED THEIR RESOLVE THE MOMENT THEY FELL IN LOVE
NADEKO MUST BE THE SAME.
Delicious~!

ACCOMPANY THEM UNTIL THE END, ALLOWING THEM TO BLOOM AS BEAUTIFULLY AS THEY CAN.
CREATE AND LEAVE WITH THEM AS MANY MEMORIES OF BLISS AS WE CAN,
WITH ALL OF OUR STRENGTH.
A GENTLE-MAN MUST ALWAYS ESCORT HIS LADY.
WE NEED ONE OF THE CUTE HONEYS HERE WITH US.
MAN... IT ISN'T FUN FOR US TWO OLD MEN TO GET SO WORKED UP ABOUT THIS...
Alright

ALTHOUGH EVERYONE HAS THE FINALITY OF "DEATH" STARING THEM IN THE FACE,
THEY STILL DECIDE TO PROACTIVELY FACE THEIR FATE HEAD ON...?
SAWA-MURA-SAN,
AREN'T YOU GOING TO EAT?
THIS IS QUITE GOOD!
HUH..?
RIGHT..

WHAT I SHOULD BE DOING FOR NADEKO...
?
...WITH ALL...
...OF MY STRENGTH...
98
100
100
100

AH
SAWAMURA-SAN?
IS SOME-THING THE MATTER?
AH... NO
IT'S NOTHING.
I'M GOING TO GO FOR A WALK
HUH?
UH... OKAY...
PASS
FUCK... IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE I LAST THOUGHT ABOUT MY PAST..
EVEN THOUGH I DECIDED TO STOP ENGAGING, TO STOP THINKING, AND JUST GO WITH THE FLOW...
STRIDE
STRIDE
STRIDE
EVEN THOUGH I'VE BEEN DOING MY BEST TO AVOID THIS VERY SITUATION...

AHAHA
CLOSE
I'M GLAD EVERYONE SEEMS TO BE NICE.

HM?
YEAH..
.....
See you tomorrow
ALL RIGHT
UMM... I HAVE SOME BUSINESS, SO..
THIS IS A JOB. I NEED TO REGAIN MY COMPOSURE AND KILL MY OWN FEELINGS.
THIS ISN'T GOOD. I LET MY EMOTIONS GET THE BETTER OF ME EARLIER.
SIMPLY OBEY THE ORDERS YOU ARE GIVEN, AND FULFILL THE ROLE OF "PARTNER" THAT YOU WERE GIVEN.
DON'T THINK. DON'T FEEL.
DON'T GET CAUGHT UP IN NADEKO AND THE OTHERS' PACE.

OH... CRAP.
WHERE AM I AGAIN?
IS THIS THE WAY BACK?
NO. I DON'T THINK I'VE BEEN THIS WAY BEFORE..
?!
NADEKO... AND LIEUTENANT SAKU-NASHI...?
FURTHER-MORE, NADEKO IS...
EXACTLY WHAT ARE THEY...?
CLICK
POINT

BAM
BAM
BAM
BAM
BAM
BAM
BAM
BAM
BAM
BAM

LIEUTE-NANT!
HAVE YOU LOST YOUR SENSES?!
AH-, SAWAMURA-SAN! THIS IS A MISUNDER-STANDING!
THIS IS TRAINING.
WHAT?!!
PLANTS ARE BEINGS THAT ACTIVATE THEIR SELF-DEFENSIVE RESPONSES WHEN INJURED, STRENGTHENING THEMSELVES, ARE THEY NOT?
TRAMPLED GRASS EVOLVES TO BECOME HARDER
SPLIT BRANCHES AND ROOTS BECOME THICKER.
"FLOWER GIRLS" WORK UNDER THE SAME LOGIC.

NADEKO'S BRANCHES AND ROOTS ARE STILL VERY THIN. THEY ARE NOT FIT TO BE USED IN COMBAT.
THAT IS WHY IT IS NECESSARY TO INJURE THEM AND CAUSE THEM TO DEVELOP AND BECOME STRONGER.
!!
SCHLR
MMM
THAT'S ENOUGH FOR TODAY
OKAY
SAME TIME TOMOR-ROW
NADEKO, YOUR ARMS...
OH... THE INJURED BRANCHES AND ROOTS RETURN INSIDE MY BODY,
SO IT BECOMES SOMETHING SIMILAR TO INTERNAL BLEEDING .

SO THIS IS THE REASON FOR THE BANDAGES YOU WERE WEARING THIS MORNING?
I'M SORRY FOR LYING.
EVEN IF THEY'RE BRANCHES AND ROOTS, IT MUST HURT WHEN THEY GET SHOT, RIGHT?
GRAB
WELL... I UNDERSTAND IT TO BE THE PRICE TO PAY FOR LOVE.
AND I DO HAVE TO BECOME STRONGER, SO...

THAT'S WHY...
I'LL DO MY BEST.

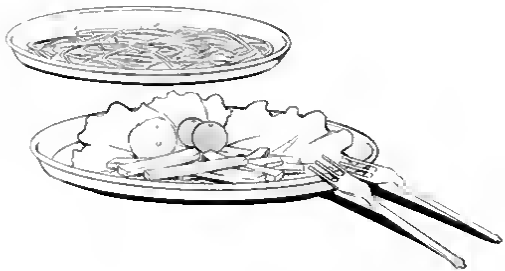
IT'S THIS PATTERN AGAIN.
YOU'RE GOING TO BE ON THE FRONT LINES OF BATTLE, YOU KNOW?
DEATH WILL CONSTANTLY BE HANGING OVER YOUR SHOULDER, YOU KNOW?!
EVEN THOUGH THEY CAN ALREADY SEE THE END,
THESE YOUNG GIRLS...

CLENCH
GRAB
HOW ARE THEY CAPABLE OF STRIDING FORWARD WITH SUCH BRIGHT SMILES?!
I'LL... ..TIE YOUR BAND-AGES.
OH..
I CAN DO THAT MYSELF...
IT'LL BE FASTER IF I DO IT.
SAWA-MURA-SAN...?
FURTHERMORE, AS YOUR PARTNER, THIS IS ONE OF MY DUTIES

UMM..
EVEN IF IT DOES HURT A LITTLE..
IT SEEMS TO BE SOMETHING THAT ONE BECOMES ACCUSTOMED TO QUITE QUICKLY, YOU KNOW?
ALL RIGHT, SEE YOU LATER THEN
AH--, RIGHT!
THANK YOU!
SCHLR
SCHLR
SCHLR
THE SHOTS I RECEIVED DURING THE EXAMINATION WEREN'T A BIG DEAL EITHER...
I THINK I MIGHT BE PRETTY RESISTANT TO PAIN
.....
CREAK

GOOD WORK TODAY
YEAH, I WAS ASKED TO HELP OUT WITH SOME ADDITIONAL ERRANDS.
HELLO, SAWAMURA-SAN.
YOU'RE A BIT LATE FOR LUNCH TODAY.
GETERIA
WE GOT A FRESH BATCH OF SUPPLIES TODAY.
THAT SO? I DIDN'T REALLY NOTICE.
.....
AT THIS RATE YOU'RE NEVER GOING TO READ THAT BOOK, YOU KNOW?
AHAHA... YEAH..
I STILL CAN'T BRING MYSELF TO DO SO.
NO.
BY THE WAY,
HAVE YOU STILL NOT OPENED THE PACKAGING FOR THAT BOOK?

Chapter 3 END



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